

**ENVIRONMENTAL CREEK CLEANUP COMMITTEE
(formerly Homeless Encampment Committee)**

MINUTES

**TUESDAY, January 17, 2023
2:00 PM**

(Paragraph numbers coincide with agenda item numbers)

1. CALL TO ORDER.

A regular meeting of the Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee (Committee) was held on January 17, 2023, in the Headquarters Building Boardroom at the Santa Clara Valley Water District, 5700 Almaden Expressway, San Jose, California and by Zoom teleconference at 2:02 p.m.

1.1 Roll Call.

Committee members in attendance were District 1 Director John L. Varela, District 2 Director Barbara F. Keegan, and District 3 Director Richard P. Santos, Chairperson presiding, constituting a quorum of the Committee.

Staff members in attendance were: Lisa Bankosh, Ricardo Barajas, Audrey Beaman, Mark Bilski, Rechelle Blank, Roseryn Bhudsabourg, Kathy Bradley, Glenna Brambill, Rick Callender, Jennifer Codianne, Ray Fields, Meenakshi Ganjoo, Rachael Gibson, Nick Ingram, Michele King, Loyd Kinsworthy, Candice Kwok-Smith, Emelia Lamas, Jay Lee, Marta Lugo, Robert Marmito, Shanika Medina, Tony Mercado, Nicole Merritt, Rene Moreno, Carlos Orellana, James Randol, Melanie Richardson, Don Rocha, Ronald Snyder, Ryan Tregoning, Sherilyn Tran, Jose Villarreal, and Beckie Zisser.

Guests in attendance were: Director Jim Beall (District 4), Todd Langton (Agape Silicon Valley & Coalition for the Unhoused of Silicon Valley), Ray Solick, (Seeds of Hope), Jamie Marcil and Ed Ramirez (Beautify San Jose), Omar Passons (City of San Jose), and Katja Irvin (Sierra Club-Loma Prieta Chapter).

Public in attendance were: John Davis, Deb K, and Shaunn.

2. TIME OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY ITEM NOT ON THE AGENDA.

Chairperson Santos declared time open for public comment on any item not on the agenda.

Don Rocha reported Valley Water's Safe, Clean Water Grants and Partnership program is currently accepting applications for the standard grant cycle with grant funding of \$1.4

million available to support water conservation, wildlife habitat restoration projects, access to trails and open space, pollution prevention, volunteer creek cleanups and education.

Ray Solick and Todd Langton recently appointed to the City of San Jose's Unhoused Task Force, informed the Committee of possible options of permanent and transitional housing developments and support services for chronically unhoused individuals.

John Davis expressed support for creating housing developments for unhoused veterans.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

3.1. Elect 2023 Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee Officers.

Recommendation: Nominate and elect the 2023 Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

The Committee deferred Item 3.1 to the next meeting.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

4.1. Approval of October 18, 2022 Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee Meeting Minutes.

Recommendation: Approve the minutes.

The Committee considered the attached minutes of the October 18, 2022 Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee meeting. It was moved by Director Keegan, seconded by Director Varela, and approved as presented.

5. ACTION ITEMS:

5.1. Updates on Valley Water's Encampment Cleanup Operations.

Recommendation: Receive updates and provide feedback on the following topics:

- A. Encampment cleanup schedule.
- B. Encampment cleanup costs and funding.
- C. Creek Safety Issues Report.
- D. Recent encampment cleanups.
- E. Fence repairs update.
- F. Creekside property owner outreach.
- G. Heavily Encamped Creek Reaches.
- H. Outreach Services MOA with Santa Clara County

Jennifer Codianne, reviewed the information on this item, per the attached Committee agenda memo, and per the information contained in Attachment 1.

The Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee noted the following without formal action:

- Regular report on creek safety issues, including recent statistics from the San José Police Department's Stream Stewardship Law Enforcement program and Coyote Creek Trail Patrol.

- Discussion of recent cleanups along West Branch Llagas Creek from Monterey Road to Highway 152, along Los Gatos Creek from Bascom Avenue to Leigh Avenue, and along Coyote Creek from downstream of Berryessa Avenue to Granite Rock.
- GIS map showing footprint of heavily encamped reaches of creek countywide.
- Recommendation to not proceed with MOA with Santa Clara County due to limited encampments outside of the City of San Jose and unreasonable indemnification provision.

Public Comments:

Shaunn expressed support for providing trash pick-up services and porta potties and more agencies working together to create solution to assist the unhoused.

Jamie Marcil reported that the City of San Jose had success with providing porta potties and handwashing stations for the unhoused but experienced an increase in illegal dumping around the trash pickup areas.

The Committee requested the following without taking formal action:

- Receive a report regarding trail enforcement statistics and their impact on the utilizations of trails and their impact on the public's safety concerns;
- Receive an analysis reflecting the impact of environmental, social, and budget costs for the cleanups associated with the unhoused population; and
- Continue ongoing discussions regarding toilet facilities for the unhoused at future meetings.

5.2. Receive Information on the Proposed Valley Water Clean Camps, Clean Creeks Program and Provide Recommendations to Staff.

Recommendation: Receive information on the proposed Valley Water Clean Camps, Clean Creeks Program and provide Recommendations to staff.

Jennifer Codianne reviewed the information on this item, per the attached Committee agenda memo.

The Committee noted the following without taking formal action:

- Potential benefits of a Valley Water Clean Camps, Clean Creeks Program
- Survey of Potential Program Models
- Consideration of Program Costs
- Program Options

Public comments:

Jamie Marcil reported Cash for Trash is the most successful program in Beautify San Jose while collecting over 120 tons of trash in the past two quarters.

John Davis expressed concern regarding the porta potties negatively

affecting the creek banks and the environment; and requested Valley Water to work on solutions that focus on keeping the creeks and environment safe and clean.

Shaunn expressed opposition to not allowing porta potties for the unhoused; requested all rewards programs to be offered to all the unhoused; requested to not have the police involved to encourage program participation; reported the unhoused did not receive Federal Emergency Management Agency assistance and evacuation centers were at capacity during the recent flooding; and requested housing be put in place that do not shuffle the unhoused from place to place that are dry and safe while protecting nature.

The Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee requested the following without taking formal action:

- Staff to research new ideas and concepts of reducing debris in waterways while building relationships with the unhoused;
- Staff to pursue new Field Operations Administrator position to assist with running Clean Camps, Clean Creeks Program; and
- Receive a recent flood report reflecting impacts on the unhoused.

5.3. Receive Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee 2022 Accomplishments Report.

Recommendation: Receive and accept the Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee 2022 Accomplishments Report.

Glenna Brambill reviewed the information on this item, per the attached Committee agenda memo and per the information contained in Attachment 1.

The Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee discussed and requested the following without taking formal action:

- Received confirmation of no current outreach negotiations with the County regarding the Memorandum of Agreement.
- Reaching out to County representatives for future attendance for Committee meetings and collaborations;

Public Comments:

John Davis expressed support to build transitional housing on available County land and noted the importance of obtaining the County's input on this matter.

Shaunn expressed opposition to building housing at the fairgrounds due to the potential of mixing volatile unhoused groups, isolation of the unhoused from the community, and lack of access to support services.

5.4. Review 2022 and 2023 Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee Work Plan and 2023 Meeting Schedule.

Recommendation: A. Review the 2023 Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee Work Plan and make adjustments as necessary; and
B. Confirm date and time of next environmental Creek Cleanup Committee meeting.

The Committee confirmed to meet more frequently starting in February 2023.

6. CLERK REVIEW AND CLARIFICATION OF COMMITTEE REQUESTS.

None.

7. ADJOURN.

Chairperson Santos adjourned the meeting at 3:14 p.m., to the next special meeting on February 21, 2023.

Nicole Merritt
Assistant Deputy Clerk II

Approved:

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